

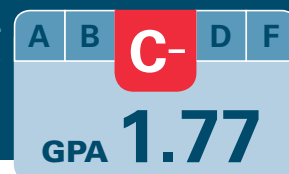


# Ohio

## State Policy Report Card 2013

State Rank: 10

OVERALL  
GRADE



Ohio has made progress in putting students first in its education policies, yet it still must make improvements. The state has adopted meaningful teacher evaluations and now should make principal evaluations just as meaningful. Ohio has linked performance to salary decisions and requires districts to base personnel decisions, including dismissal, on classroom effectiveness, but it still allows tenure to serve as a driving factor in layoff decisions. The state should build on its progress in teacher pension reform and require participation in its portable plan. The state should do more to empower parents by removing restrictions to public charter school growth. Ohio has adopted a strong accountability system for charter schools; by removing growth caps and providing comparable funding, parents will have greater access to quality public school choices. Ohio also offers an opportunity scholarship program and recently strengthened mayoral control in Cleveland, which can serve as a model for reforms for the rest of the state.

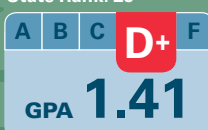


### State Momentum Builder

Ohio took a big step toward reforming many of its schools this year by passing the Cleveland Plan, which includes a number of policies to elevate the teaching profession and utilize innovative intervention models for low-performing schools in Cleveland. This bold plan, which was created and implemented by Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, has the potential to serve as a model for reform throughout the state.

### Elevate Teaching

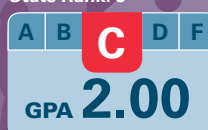
State Rank: 25



While Ohio is strong in some aspects of this area, it is behind when it comes to ensuring effective teachers and principals are identified, retained, and rewarded by districts. Notably, Ohio requires districts to evaluate educators on a framework that significantly weighs student growth. However, key multiple measures are missing from both teacher and principal evaluations. Further, while ineffectiveness is tied to dismissal, seniority is permitted to drive personnel decisions. Ohio does not allow a compensation system that rewards teachers for their work and results. If Ohio wants to strengthen its teaching corps, it must treat them like the professionals they are by strengthening its evaluations and requiring districts to use teacher effectiveness as the driving factor in recruitment, placement, layoff, tenure, and compensation decisions.

### Empower Parents

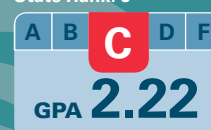
State Rank: 3



All families should have the information and access they need to provide their children with a quality education, and no student should be forced to attend a low-performing school or be taught by a low-performing teacher. Ohio has adopted a meaningful school report card that assigns A-F letter grades to all public schools based on student achievement data. The state should also require parental consent to place students with an ineffective teacher and grant parents the power to demand the turn around of a failing school. Ohio must not restrict public charter school growth; instead, the state must leverage its strong charter accountability policies and ensure that parents have access to high-quality choices only. Also, Ohio has a publicly funded scholarship program that provides additional options, but should target the program to low-income students in chronically failing public schools and hold participating schools accountable for student achievement.

### Spend Wisely & Govern Well

State Rank: 9



Ohio has a robust system of authorized shared services for districts and charters, called "Educational Regional Service System," that permits cost efficiencies. For low-performing schools and districts, Ohio allows for state control and, this year, enhanced mayoral control in Cleveland. The state should leverage this model, which includes policy reforms related to teacher quality and school choice, in other low-performing districts in the state. Notably, districts are able to achieve cost efficiencies through multiple management alternatives. Ohio should enhance transparency and accountability by requiring districts to link spending to academic achievement. Ohio should also move to a fully portable retirement plan to ensure that all teachers have career flexibility and retirement security. Adopting these changes will strengthen Ohio's ability to ensure that resources are being spent wisely.

## Ohio Fast Facts

### Total Students, 2010–11

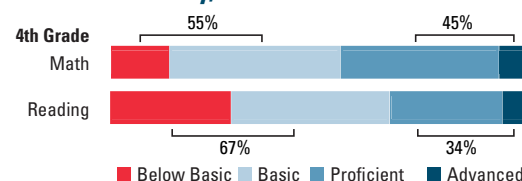
**1,754,191**

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Common Core of Data (CCD), and 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

### NAEP Scale Score Rank, 2011

4TH GRADE	MATH	READING
	15	15
8TH GRADE	MATH	READING
	15	15

### NAEP Proficiency, 2011



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# Elevate Teaching

## Comprehensive Evaluation



Strong evaluation systems are foundational to improving teacher and principal quality; evaluations recognize excellence, support development, and address ineffectiveness. They must be meaningful, objective, and fair. In this area, Ohio is a leader in several aspects. Teachers are evaluated annually according to a four-tier rating system that includes multiple measures, including classroom observations and student growth, which comprises 50% of the total evaluation. Principals are required to be evaluated on a comparable scale. Ohio must continue on its path of investing in its educators by incorporating student feedback in teacher evaluations and the effective management of teachers in principal evaluations. The state's evaluation criteria are not subject to contract negotiations, ensuring these systems will be subject to change based on student interests alone.

**Momentum Builder:** State has made recent progress in this policy area.

**Anchor Objective:** Foundational policy for meaningful education reform.

**Gold Standard:** Exemplar state policies that prioritize bold reform and put students first.

Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Teacher Evaluations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Principal Evaluations</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Evaluations &amp; Contracts</b>	<b>4</b>

## Use Evaluations for Personnel Decisions



Basing personnel decisions on performance is critical to building schools that retain effective teachers and make student achievement paramount. Ohio is behind in this area; specifically, the state does not use teacher effectiveness to drive decisions around teacher assignment, layoffs, and tenure. However, because teachers with consistently ineffective performance can be dismissed, and because seniority cannot be a factor in teacher reinstatement, Ohio mitigates (but does not eliminate) the negative impact of forced placement. When teachers are forced to be laid off during a budget-induced reduction in force, seniority is explicitly prohibited from being used as a basis, although Ohio allows districts to prioritize tenured teachers during RIFs. Ohio teachers receive tenure status after serving a probationary period of five years. Attainment and revocation of tenure are not tied to performance standards. Prioritizing students and great teachers requires that performance, evident through strong evaluations, be the driving influence for all personnel decisions.

Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Ending Forced Placement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Staffing Decision</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Tenure Attainment &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>0</b>

## Value Effective Teachers



To encourage a high-quality, diverse workforce, professional pay should be based on performance rather than other non-classroom factors such as seniority or degrees held. Ohio only permits school districts in the city of Cleveland or those that are Race to the Top subgrantees to implement performance-pay compensation systems. Otherwise, districts must use the state's minimum salary schedule, which bases teacher pay on years of experience and degree type. To prioritize the hiring and retention of effective teachers statewide, Ohio should prohibit automatic salary increases for master's degrees alone and require all districts to link pay increases to performance measures that prioritize student outcomes.

Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Reward Performance with Pay</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Reform Salary Schedules</b>	<b>0</b>

## Alternative Teacher Certification



Ohio offers alternative certification and teacher preparation by permitting non-universities to provide teacher preparation programs. A bachelor's degree is required, but not in the subject taught. However, there is only a minimum 2.5 GPA requirement for admission. To attract the highest-quality teachers, Ohio should increase the selectivity of admissions criteria to a 3.0 GPA minimum. Ohio does not have a clear process for authorizing, evaluating, and decommissioning alternative certification programs that is based on teacher effectiveness. The state requires performance designations, but these are based solely on state examination pass rates of program graduates. To ensure the most robust alternative certification programs, Ohio needs to establish clear processes for authorizing, evaluating, and decommissioning programs based on teacher effectiveness data and evaluations.

Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Alternative Certification Pathways</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Alternative Certification Accountability</b>	<b>0</b>



# Empower Parents

## Empower Parents with Information



Ohio has taken some steps to empower parents in the state, but there is still room for improvement. Ohio requires an annual performance report for each school, but to further empower parents with accessible information, Ohio should require that these reports give each school an A-F letter grade based on student achievement. The state also should give parents access to teacher effectiveness data and require schools to notify parents and obtain their consent prior to placing a student with an ineffective teacher. Lastly, Ohio has introduced a strong pilot program for parent trigger in the Columbus City School District. To further enhance parental empowerment, Ohio should establish a parent trigger law that allows a majority of parents to band together at the grassroots level and petition to turn around low-performing schools throughout the state.

**Momentum Builder:** State has made recent progress in this policy area.

**Anchor Objective:** Foundational policy for meaningful education reform.

**Gold Standard:** Exemplar state policies that prioritize bold reform and put students first.



Objective	Score (0-4)
School Report Cards	4
Parent Notification	0
Parent Trigger	0

## Increase Quality Choices



Ohio is taking important steps to increase high-quality school choice options to ensure its students are not trapped in failing schools. The state allows for the creation of public charter schools and holds these schools to high accountability standards that require closure of persistently failing public charter schools. Ohio's new charter accountability rules can serve as a national model. However, the state should not restrict the growth of new public charter schools and should create a fast-track authorization process for high-performing charter schools. Additionally, the state should amend its current publicly funded scholarship programs by restricting eligibility to low-income students attending chronically failing public schools.



Objective	Score (0-4)
Opportunity Scholarship	2
Charter Establishment & Expansion	0
Charter Accountability	4



## Provide Comparable Resources for All Public Options



Children stuck in chronically failing schools should have an option to attend another school of their choice without being punished by the state through reduced funding. Ohio law concerning public charter school funding contains a number of differences from how traditional public schools are funded. Ohio should provide comparable funding, fully fund facilities financing programs, and prohibit skimming. Ohio should also amend its scholarship program to provide a scholarship tuition amount that is competitive with private school tuition. The amount is currently limited to \$4,250 for kindergarten through eighth grade and \$5,000 for high school annually. Ohio provides charter schools with access to unused school facilities; however, high-achievement schools are not prioritized.



Objective	Score (0-4)
Fund Fairly	0
Enable Equitable Access to Facilities	3
Charter Facilities Financing	1

## Methodology

State policies were analyzed and assigned an individual score from 0 to 4, with 4 representing the strongest lever for reform and the most common sense policy for students. Anchor policies were assigned a 3x weight. Grade point averages (GPAs) were calculated based on grouping policies by category. For the full methodology, evaluation rubric, and detailed analysis of each policy, please visit the website at [reportcard.studentsfirst.org](http://reportcard.studentsfirst.org).

## GPA Sample Calculations

	Score	Weight	Subtotal
Objective 1	3	x 3	= 9
Objective 2	2	x 3	= 6
Objective 3	4	x 1	= 4
	7		19
GPA = Subtotal ÷ Total Weight			
GPA = 19 ÷ 7 = 2.71			



## Spend Wisely & Govern Well

### Promote Governance Structures that Streamline Accountability



The ability to turn around failing schools is often hampered by bureaucratic red tape and politics. Ohio allows for governance flexibility at both the local and state levels. At the local level, the state allows for limited mayoral control of specified districts, including newly enhanced mayoral authority in Cleveland. Ohio could strengthen its mayoral control law by allowing the mayor to directly appoint a chancellor to oversee the district rather than establishing a middle layer of governance through an appointed nine-member board of education. At the state level, Ohio has a strong takeover model. It allows for numerous types of state intervention in school districts that have been identified for improvement for three consecutive school years.



**Momentum Builder:** State has made recent progress in this policy area.



**Anchor Objective:** Foundational policy for meaningful education reform.



**Gold Standard:** Exemplar state policies that prioritize bold reform and put students first.

### Spend Taxpayer Resources Wisely to Improve Outcomes for Students



Given the limited resources available for public education, states must ensure that districts spend as many dollars as possible in the classroom rather than in bureaucracy and that the dollars invested drive the greatest change. To promote cost efficiencies, Ohio established the Educational Regional Service System, a robust network of authorized shared services for school districts and charter schools. However, Ohio should provide greater staffing and spending flexibility to school districts by removing less effective class-size restrictions past the third grade and other restrictions that limit districts' ability to reallocate resources to their greatest needs. Ohio should also empower data-driven decisionmaking by improving the financial data it collects and linking spending to academic achievement.



Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Mayoral &amp; State Control</b>	<b>3</b>



Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Fiscal Transparency</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Management Alternatives</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Class Size</b>	<b>0</b>

### Make Teacher Pensions Portable and Fair



Attracting a high-quality workforce will require a competitive retirement plan. Portable retirement options, such as 401(k) plans, are an essential component of compensation packages and make the teaching profession more competitive. It is a classic win-win for teachers and districts. Under current policy, Ohio provides three employer-sponsored retirement options for employees of traditional schools and certain public charter schools, including a defined benefit plan, a portable defined contribution plan, and a hybrid plan. To provide the most career flexibility and ensure sustainability of the existing system, Ohio should require all employees of traditional public schools to participate in its defined contribution plan or offer a cash balance plan and permit public charter schools to opt out of the plan.



Objective	Score (0-4)
<b>Pension Reform</b>	<b>2</b>



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A movement to transform public education

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StudentsFirst is a bipartisan grassroots movement of more than 2 million members nationwide, working to focus our education system on what's best for students. Today, too many of America's children are not getting the quality education they need and deserve. StudentsFirst is helping to change that with common sense reforms that help make sure all students have great schools and great teachers. We are working to ensure educators are valued for the critical role they play in kids' lives, families have high-quality school choices and a real say in their child's education, and our tax dollars are spent wisely on what works for kids. Launched by former Washington D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee in December 2010, StudentsFirst has successfully helped pass more than 70 student-centered policies in 17 states, and our movement continues to grow.